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SPRING MEET OPENER DRAWS 162 ENTRIES INCLUDING CHAMPION MONOMOY GIRL

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Tuesday, May 12, 2020) – Horses are back at Churchill Downs and they are ready to run. Saturday's Opening Day program of the 2020 Spring Meet has an average field size of 11.3 horses for the action-packed 11-race program, which includes the return of champion **Monomoy Girl** in the featured fourth race, a conditioned allowance event at one-mile on the main track with a purse of \$85,000.

"It's been a long time coming but we are thrilled for (Monomoy Girl) to return to the races," trainer **Brad Cox** said. "She's been working great down at Keeneland since late March and we're looking forward to this first step back."

Owned by **Michael Dubb, Monomoy Stables, The Elkstone Group** and **Bethlehem Stables**, Monomoy Girl has been on the sidelines since September after dealing with a minor hamstring pull and a bout of colic.

Monomoy Girl capped her brilliant 3-year-old campaign with victories in the 2018 Longines Kentucky Oaks (Grade I) and Breeders' Cup Distaff (GI). She will be reunited with her regular pilot **Florent Geroux** for Saturday's contest from post No. 2. Geroux has been aboard Monomoy Girl for her last three works at Keeneland including a swift five-furlong move in :59.40 last Saturday.

First post Saturday is 1 p.m. (all times Eastern), with Race 4 headed to the gate at 2:32 p.m.

Some of racing's biggest stars have aligned for the Spring Meet which includes many of the nation's top jockeys led by **Javier Castellano, Jose Ortiz, Joel Rosario** and **John Velazquez**. Those jockeys will join several of Churchill Downs' household names on Saturday's card including **Tyler Gaffalione, Geroux, James Graham, Brian Hernandez Jr., Chris Landeros, Julien Leparoux, Miguel Mena, Ricardo Santana Jr.**, and, of course, defending Spring Meet leading rider **Corey Lanerie**.

Other jockeys joining the fray are **Rafael Bejarano, Manny Franco, Mitchell Murrill** and **Joe Talamo**.

A total of 47 jockeys are listed in Book 1 of the Churchill Downs Spring Meet Condition Book. Others include **Irad Ortiz, Luiz Saez, Mike Smith** and **Drayden Van Dyke**. The entire list of jockeys can be found on page 63 of the condition book: [2020 Spring Meet Condition Book Volume I](#).

Hall of Fame trainer **Steve Asmussen** is poised to defend his 2019 Spring Meet Leading Trainer title but several new names have been allotted stalls for the entirety of the Spring Meet including Hall of Fame trainer **Bob Baffert** and multiple Eclipse Award-winning trainers **Chad Brown** and **Todd Pletcher**. Other new names stabled at Churchill Downs include **Jerry Hollendorfer** and **John Sadler**.

The overnight for Saturday's card will be uploaded to the following link on Tuesday afternoon: <https://www.churchilldowns.com/horsemen/racing/overnights/>. There were 124 horses that were entered in the body of each race with 38 on the also eligible list.

SATURDAY LATE PICK 5 FEATURES ULTRA-COMPETATIVE SEQUENCE WITH TWO ALLOWANCE RACES AND TWO MAIDEN SPECIAL WEIGHTS – Saturday's late 50-cent Pick 5 will feature a strong sequence with two allowance events and a duo of maiden special weight races with each having an over-subscribed field.

The sequence, which starts in Race 7 at 4:06 p.m. (all times Eastern), has a low 15 percent takeout.

The seventh race is a six-furlong maiden special weight for fillies and mares 3-year-olds and up with a purse of \$79,000. The field includes recent Gulfstream Park runner-up **Say Moi**, who will be ridden by **John Velazquez** for trainer **Bill Mott**.

Race 8 is a one-mile allowance race on the Matt Winn Turf Course that features the **Chad Brown**-trained **Motagally**, who is making her first start on the grass, and multiple graded-stakes placed **Uncapped** for trainer **Brendan Walsh**.

The ninth race is a \$50,000 claiming event at seven furlongs for 3-year-olds and up that have not won two races. The race drew 12 horses in the body with two on the also-eligible list.

Race 10 is a first-level allowance contest for 3-year-old fillies at seven furlongs. A field of 12 horses drew into the body of the race with four also-eligible entrants including Grade II-placed **Portrait** for trainer **Brad Cox** and \$125,000 Gaspaprilla Stakes runner-up **Mo City**.

The sequence will close with a 5 ½-furlong allowance race on the turf for 3-year-old fillies. The uber-competitive field includes undefeated **Ilchester Cheetah** (trainer **Jerry O'Dwyer**), \$75,000 Cincinnati Trophy Stakes winner **Karak (Wesley Ward)** and \$100,000 Stewart Manor Stakes winner **Fly So Pretty (Mark Casse)**.

MORE THAN 320 HORSES HAVE ARRIVED AT CHURCHILL DOWNS – More than 320 horses have arrived on the backstretch of Churchill Downs and its adjacent property Trackside Louisville as of 11 a.m. Tuesday, according to senior director of the stable area **Steve Hargrave**.

Wednesday will mark the first day of ship-ins from Florida with approximately 500 horses expected to arrive over the next three days. Trainers such as **Rusty Arnold, Chad Brown, Dale Romans** and **Ian Wilkes** are all expected to arrive in the next three days.

The first day of training will begin on Wednesday at 5:30 a.m.

\$559,000 DAILY AVERAGE FOR PURSES, \$2.25 MILLION STAKES SCHEDULE ON TAP FOR SPRING MEET

Horsemen will be able to compete for an average of \$559,000 each day when the 2020 Spring Meet at Churchill Downs begins Saturday.

After opening weekend (May 16-17), racing at Churchill Downs will be staged Thursdays through Sundays with a special holiday Monday card on Memorial Day, May 25. Post time for the first race each day will be 1 p.m. (all times Eastern). Closing day of the shortened 26-day Spring Meet is Saturday, June 27. All racing for Spring Meet will be conducted spectator-free until government officials issue approval of fans otherwise at Churchill Downs.

A total of 125 races cumulatively worth \$7,265,000 are offered in the first condition book, which covers May 16-June 5. Maiden special weight races offer a purse of \$79,000 and allowance races range between \$81,000 and \$88,000. All purses include prize money from the Kentucky Thoroughbred Development Fund.

The stakes schedule throughout the meet features 16 stakes totaling \$2,250,000:

- Saturday, May 23 (Stephen Foster Preview Day): Grade III, \$150,000 Matt Winn (3-year-olds at 1 1/16 miles); \$100,000 Blame (4-year-olds and up at one mile); \$100,000 Shawnee (fillies and mares at 1 1/16 miles); \$100,000 War Chant (3-year-olds at one mile on turf); and \$100,000 Tepin (3-year-old fillies at one mile on turf).
- Saturday, May 30: Grade III, \$100,000 Old Forester Mint Julep (fillies and mares at 1 1/16 miles on turf) and Grade III, \$100,000 Winning Colors (fillies and mares at six furlongs).
- Saturday, June 6: \$100,000 Aristides (Listed) (4-year-olds and up at six furlongs) and Grade III, \$100,000 Dogwood (3-year-old fillies at seven furlongs).
- Saturday, June 13: Grade III, \$100,000 Louisville (4-year-olds and up at 1 1/2 miles on turf).
- Saturday, June 20: Grade II, \$200,000 Wise Dan (4-year-olds and up at 1 1/16 miles on turf) and \$100,000 Audubon (3-year-olds at 1 1/8 miles on turf).
- Saturday, June 27 (Stephen Foster Day): Grade II, \$500,000 Stephen Foster (4-year-olds and up at 1 1/8 miles); Grade II, \$200,000 Fleur de Lis (fillies and mares at 1 1/8 miles); Grade III, \$100,000 Regret (3-year-old fillies at 1 1/8 miles on turf); and Grade III, \$100,000 Bashford Manor (2-year-olds at six furlongs).

The second condition book for racing between June 6-27 is expected to be published by May 29.

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